



San Diego City Attorney **MICHAEL J. AGUIRRE**

NEWS RELEASE

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CITY ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES NEW MANAGEMENT TEAM

City Attorney Michael Aguirre announced his new management team today. The new leadership includes a former San Diego City Council member, a former United States Attorney and two former high ranking Deputy District Attorneys. In addition, the City Attorney made numerous promotions within the Office.

"My purpose in restructuring the Office and issuing new assignments is to achieve the highest level of excellence in our work and employee performance," said City Attorney Aguirre.

Assistant City Attorney Rupert Linley, a former Deputy District Attorney, will head up the Criminal Division. His Chief Deputy is Andrea Freshwater, also a former Deputy District Attorney, who will oversee operations in the Criminal Division. Former United States Attorney Patrick O'Toole will lead the new Public Integrity Unit in the Criminal Division.

In the Civil Division, Abbe Wolfsheimer, a former San Diego City Council member, and Marilyn Riley, the former counsel to the California Senate Judiciary Committee, have joined the City Attorney's newly created Business & Government Section as Deputy City Attorneys, working on a part-time basis. Deputy City Attorney Wolfsheimer will be assisting with the transition to the strong mayor form of government. In addition, Karen Heumann, the former chair of the Rancho Bernardo Planning Group, has also been appointed a Deputy City Attorney in the Real Property Section.

In addition, City Attorney Aguirre created the position of Managing Assistant City Attorney to run the law office in the Civil Division. He also created an employee-driven Management Committee to identify and address staff issues in the Civil Division.

The new leadership in the office and new assignments also include the following:

- Keri Katz has been promoted to Managing Assistant City Attorney for the Civil Division. She will be responsible for the day-to-day operations and will work with the Assistant City Attorneys in ensuring the Civil Division is running effectively and efficiently. Assistant City Attorney Katz will report directly to the City Attorney.

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- Gene Gordon has been promoted to Assistant City Attorney in charge of litigation in the Civil Division. Assistant City Attorney Gordon has been a civil litigator for more than 25 years.
- Prescilla Dugard has been promoted to Assistant City Attorney and will be in charge of the advisory attorneys in the Civil Division.
- Deborah Berger has been promoted to Assistant City Attorney and will work on special projects. Her current assignment is working on pension, labor issues and other matters as assigned by the City Attorney.
- Les Girard, Assistant City Attorney, will continue to work on special projects. His assignments include the council docket, the transition to the strong mayor form of government and other matters as assigned by the City Attorney.
- Chris Morris has been promoted to Chief of the Business & Government Section. This Section combines the former Employment & Safety Unit and the former Public Policy Unit.
- Lisa Foster and Catherine Bradley will also be a part of the Business & Government Section as well as Deputy City Attorneys Mary Jo Lanzafame and Anita Noone. Deputy City Attorney Noone will be working with the new Financial & Disclosure Unit.
- Joan Dawson and Melissa Summerhays, former Deputy City Attorneys in the Criminal Division, will also be joining the Business & Government Section and will be working as Police Legal Advisors.
- Carrie Gleeson has been promoted to Chief of the Real Property Section.
- Kelly Salt has been promoted to Chief of the Public Works Section.
- Mike McGuinness has been promoted to Chief of the Litigation Specialist Section.
- Mike McGowan has been reassigned to the Litigation Section to assist with civil service matters.
- Yolanda Gammill is on special assignment related to the pension and disclosure issues.
- Maria Velasquez is the Communications Director in the newly created Communications Division which reports directly to the City Attorney. Her duties will expand to include internal and external communications, including media relations, community outreach, website content and staff communications. Maria will also work closely with the newly created Management Committee in the Civil Division.
- Richel Thaler will continue as the Administrative Services Director and will focus on human resources, budget and information technology issues for the office. She reports directly to the City Attorney and will work with the Management Committee in the Civil Division.
- Jeff Van Deerlin is the Government Affairs Manager in the Communications Division. He will be assisting the City Attorney with government relations within the City and other jurisdictions. Mr. Van Deerlin has several years of legislative experience.
- Maria Byrnes, is the confidential secretary to the City Attorney. Ms. Byrnes was Mr. Aguirre's secretary in his private practice and has worked for him for twenty years.

Under the City Charter, the City Attorney serves as the chief legal advisor for the City (Civil Division) and is the misdemeanor prosecutor on behalf of the People of the State of California (Criminal Division). There are 311 people employed in the City Attorney's Office: 134 attorneys and 177 support staff.

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